

TALES OF SHIVA

THE MIGHTY LORD OF KAILASA

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SHIVA AND ARJUNA

QUIET, PEACEFUL INDRAKEELA, IN THE HIMALAYAS WAS A RETREAT OF ASCETICS.











* SALUTATIONS TO SHIVA


FOUR MONTHS LATER—
WE CANNOT GO ANY NEARER.
THE HEAT OF THE TERRIBLE PENANCE IS SPREADING FAR AND WIDE.


IT SOON CHOKED THE WHOLE FOREST.


THE SAGES OF INDRAKEELA SET OUT FOR KAILASA, THE ABODE OF LORD SHIVA.


AT KAILASA —
LORD, GRANT ARJUNA HIS WISH, AND RELIEVE US OF THIS SUFFERING.
SO BE IT.

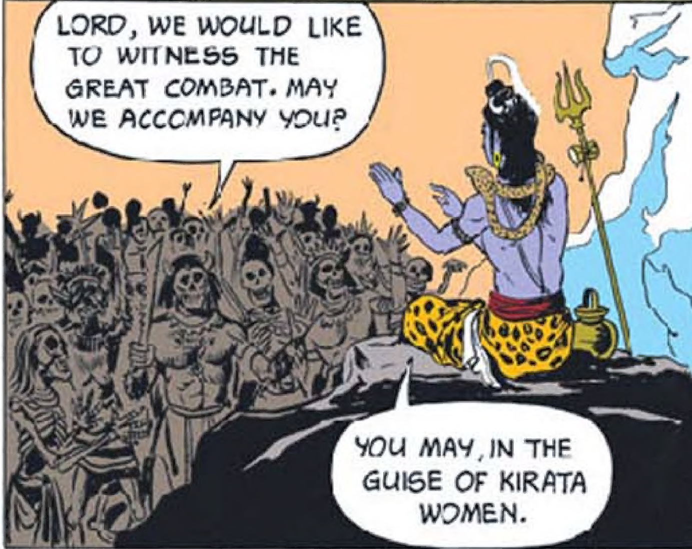

WHEN THE SAGES DEPARTED —
WHAT DOES ARJUNA WANT, MY LORD?
HE WANTS CELESTIAL WEAPONS.


CAN HE WIELD THEM, MY LORD?
I WILL FIND OUT BY TESTING HIM.


I'LL APPEAR BEFORE HIM AS A KIRATA* AND ENGAGE HIM IN A DUEL.
MAY I ACCOMPANY YOU?


YOU MAY, BUT IN DISGUISE.
I SHALL COME AS A KIRATA-WOMAN.

* HUNTER

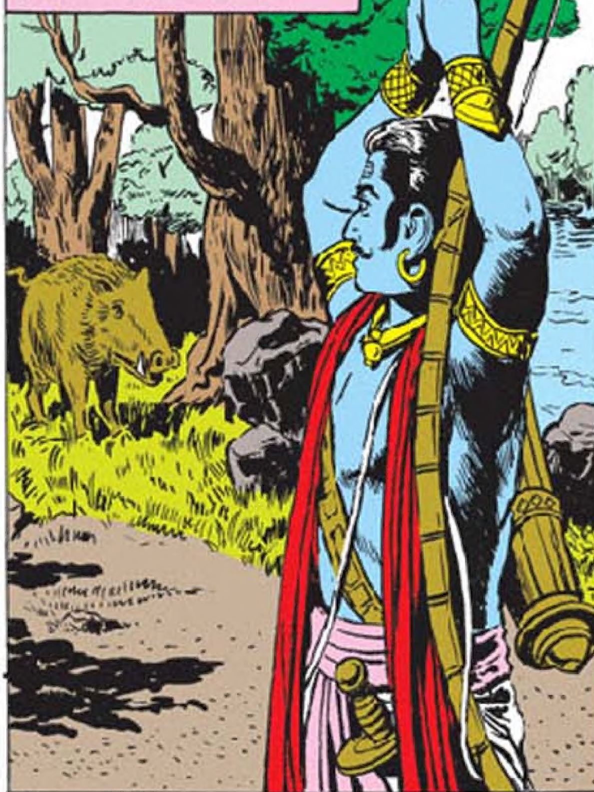

WHEN THE HORDES OF SHIVA HEARD ABOUT IT—
LORD, WE WOULD LIKE TO WITNESS THE GREAT COMBAT. MAY WE ACCOMPANY YOU?
YOU MAY, IN THE GUISE OF KIRATA WOMEN.


SOON—


AS THEY APPROACHED INDRAKEELA —
SEE THAT BOAR RUNNING WILD, MY LORD.
HAH ! A FIT TARGET FOR MY ARROW !


BUT THE WILY, SWIFT BOAR OUTDISTANCED THE KIRATA...


...AND CHARGED INTO THE QUIET HERMITAGE, DRIVING THE ASCETICS HELTER-SKELTER.
IT IS MOOKASURA AGAIN! NOW IN THE FORM OF A BOAR!


HIS PENANCE DISTURBED BY THE DIN, ARJUNA OPENED HIS EYES...


...RAISED HIS BOW AND TOOK AIM.
STOP! IT'S MINE. LEAVE IT TO ME. I WAS STALKING IT.


SHOOT IT AND CLAIM IT. HUNTERS DO NOT BEG.


THE BOAR WAS CAUGHT BETWEEN THE TWO UNERRING ARROWS...


...AND FELL DEAD, REVEALING THE TRUE FORM OF MOOKA-SURA.*
VICTORY TO OUR LORD!
YOUR ARROW KILLED IT.

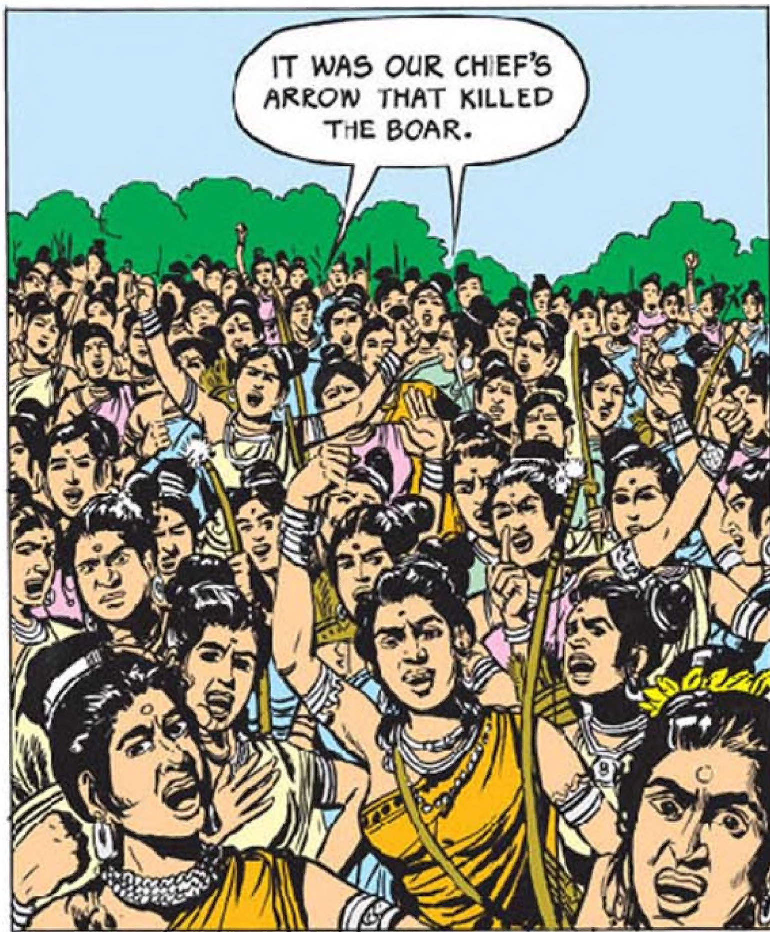
* DEMON MOOKA


THE WILD EXULTATION OF THE KIRATA WOMEN AMUSED ARJUNA.
O KIRATA, DOES NOT THIS THICK FOREST TERRIFY YOUR WOMEN FOLK ? AND YOU THEIR ONLY ESCORT?


YOUNG MAN, WE FEAR NOTHING.

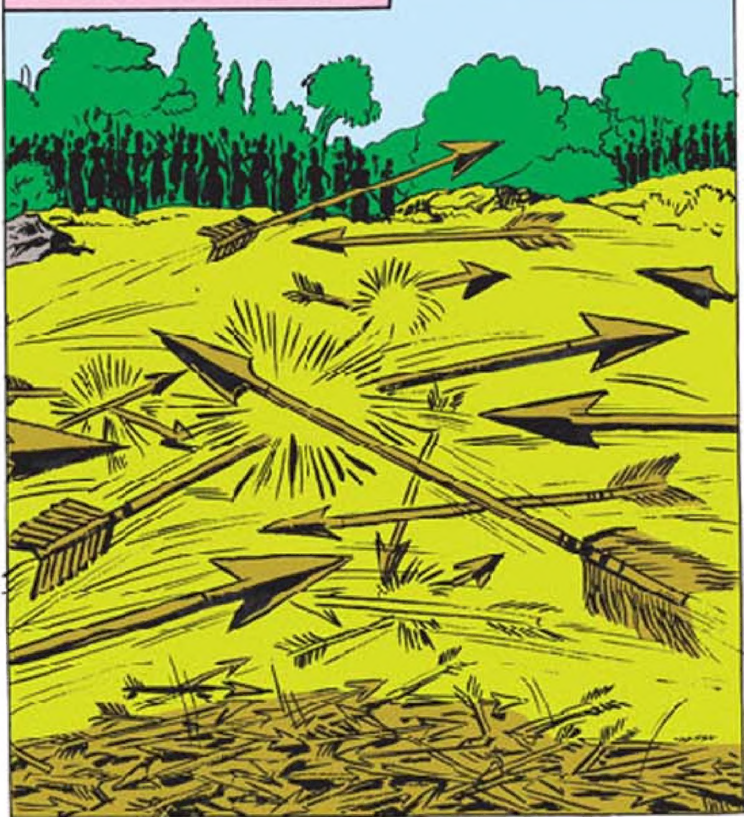

PERHAPS YOU ARE TERRIFIED. YOU DO APPEAR SOFT !


SOFT ? ME ? DIDN'T YOU SEE THE FORCE OF MY ARROW PIERCING THE BOAR ?


IT WAS OUR CHIEF'S ARROW THAT KILLED THE BOAR.


THEY SPEAK THE TRUTH, YOUNG MAN. YOUR ARROW HIT A DEAD BOAR.


ARJUNA WAS ENRAGED.
ALL RIGHT, KIRATA. WE WILL SETTLE ONCE AND FOR ALL WHO IS THE BETTER SHOT.

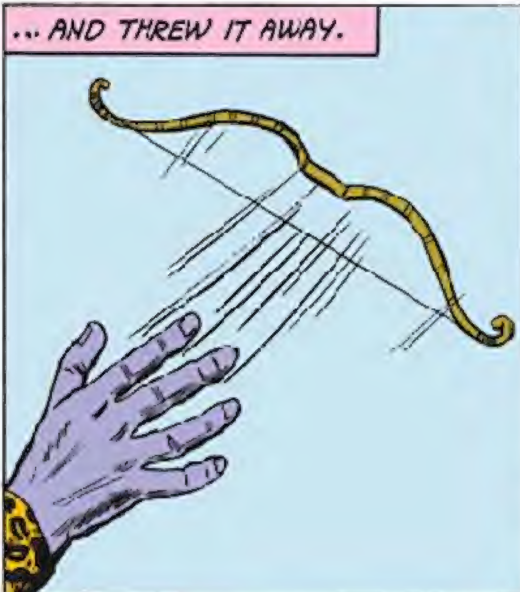

ARROWS WHIZZED PAST AS THE TWO ARCHERS MATCHED THEIR SKILLS.


AFTER A WHILE —
MY QUIVER IS EMPTY AND NOT A SCRATCH YET ON THE KIRATA.

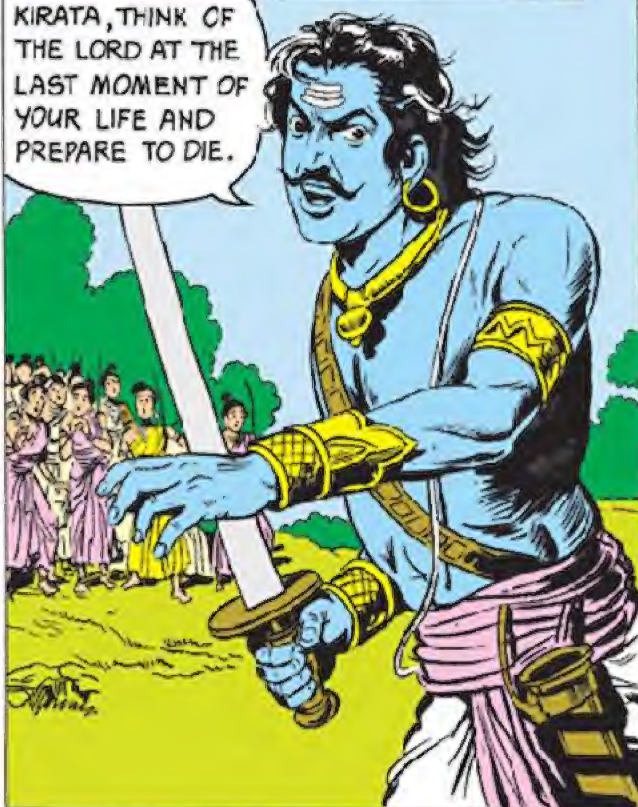

O MIGHTY ARCHER, SHALL I LEND YOU A FEW ARROWS?


IN A DEFT MOVE, ARJUNA CAUGHT THE KIRATA IN HIS BOWSTRING.


THE NEXT MOMENT, THE KIRATA WRESTED THE BOW FROM ARJUNA...


... AND THREW IT AWAY.


THE KIRATA WOMEN DANCED FOR JOY.
THE ASCETIC IS BEATEN!


UNDAUNTED, ARJUNA WITH HIS SWORD RAISED, RUSHED TOWARDS THE KIRATA.
KIRATA, THINK OF THE LORD AT THE LAST MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE AND PREPARE TO DIE.


AS ARJUNA SMOTE THE HEAD OF THE KIRATA WITH HIS HEAVY SWORD, IT BROKE.


SHORN OF HIS ARMS, ARJUNA CONTINUED THE FIGHT WITH UPROOTED TREES.
BUT THE KIRATA REMAINED UNSCATHED.


IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT, ARJUNA CHARGED AT THE KIRATA WITH BARE HANDS.


WITH A FLICK OF HIS WRIST, THE KIRATA LIFTED ARJUNA...


...AND FLUNG HIM DOWN.


A HUMBLED ARJUNA THOUGHT OF SHIVA AND HIS GRACE.


RIGHT ON THE SPOT HE MADE A LINGA ...


... AND BEGAN TO WORSHIP IT.


A NEW POWER SURGED THROUGH HIS LIMBS.


A REJUVENATED ARJUNA AGAIN CHALLENGED HIS RIVAL.
KIRATA, YOUR TIME IS UP!





SHIVA THEN REVEALED HIMSELF IN HIS TRUE FORM AND SO DID PARVATI IN HERS.



SHIVA'S WORD CAME TRUE. LATER IN THE MAHABHARATA WAR, IT WAS ONLY WITH THE PASHUPATA THAT ARJUNA COULD KILL HIS ARCH-RIVAL, KARNA.



ONCE IN KAILASA, SHIVA STARTED EXPOUNDING THE MYSTERY OF THE VEDAS TO PARVATI WHO WAS LISTENING ATTENTIVELY.





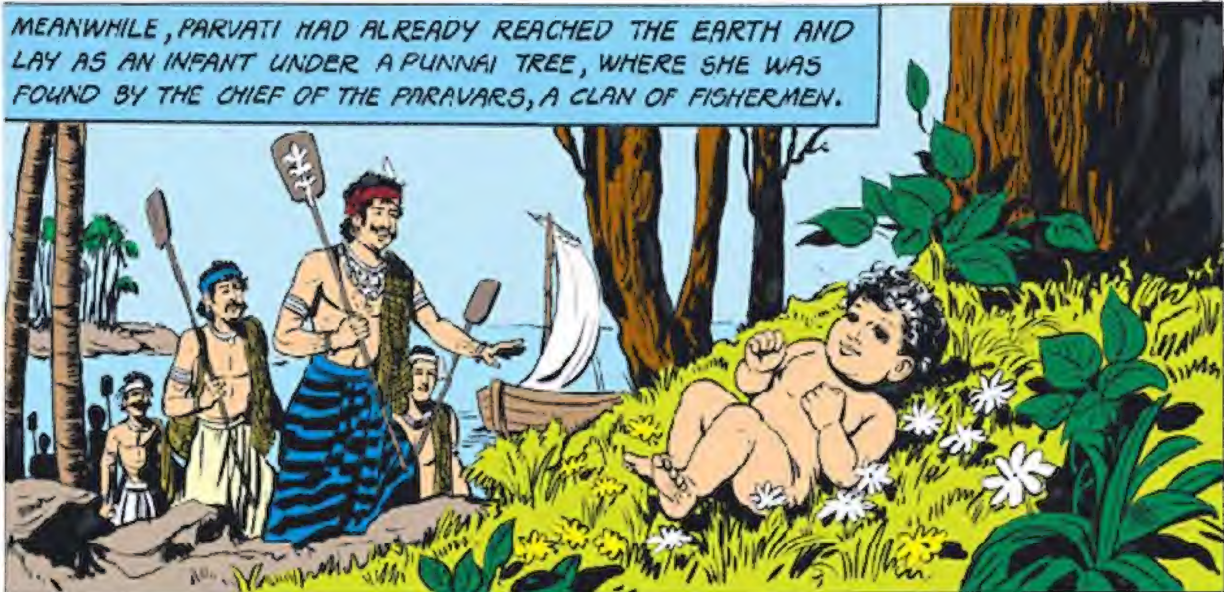

THE VEDAS ARE NOT FOR YOU. SINCE YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN A COMMON FISHERWOMAN...


...MAY YOU BE BORN AS ONE !


BUT WHEN PARVATI VANISHED, THE VERY NEXT MOMENT —
WHAT HAVE I DONE !


IN THOUGHTLESS HASTE HAVE I CAST AWAY ONE WHOSE LOVE FOR ME WAS PEERLESS.


SHIVA'S STATE OF MIND DID NOT ESCAPE NANDI, HIS TRUSTED SERVANT.
NOW MY MASTER WILL KNOW NO PEACE UNTIL MOTHER PARVATI RETURNS.


MEANWHILE, PARVATI HAD ALREADY REACHED THE EARTH AND LAY AS AN INFANT UNDER A PUNNAI TREE, WHERE SHE WAS FOUND BY THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS, A CLAN OF FISHERMEN.


WHAT A LOVELY CHILD! NO DOUBT IT IS GOD'S GIFT TO ME. I'LL CALL HER PARVATI.

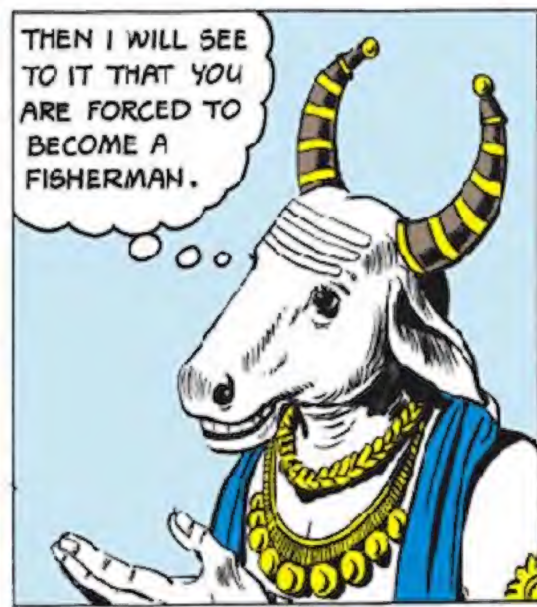

LITTLE PARVATI USED TO GO WITH HER FOSTER FATHER WHENEVER HE WENT FISHING.
LOOK! A HUGE FISH!

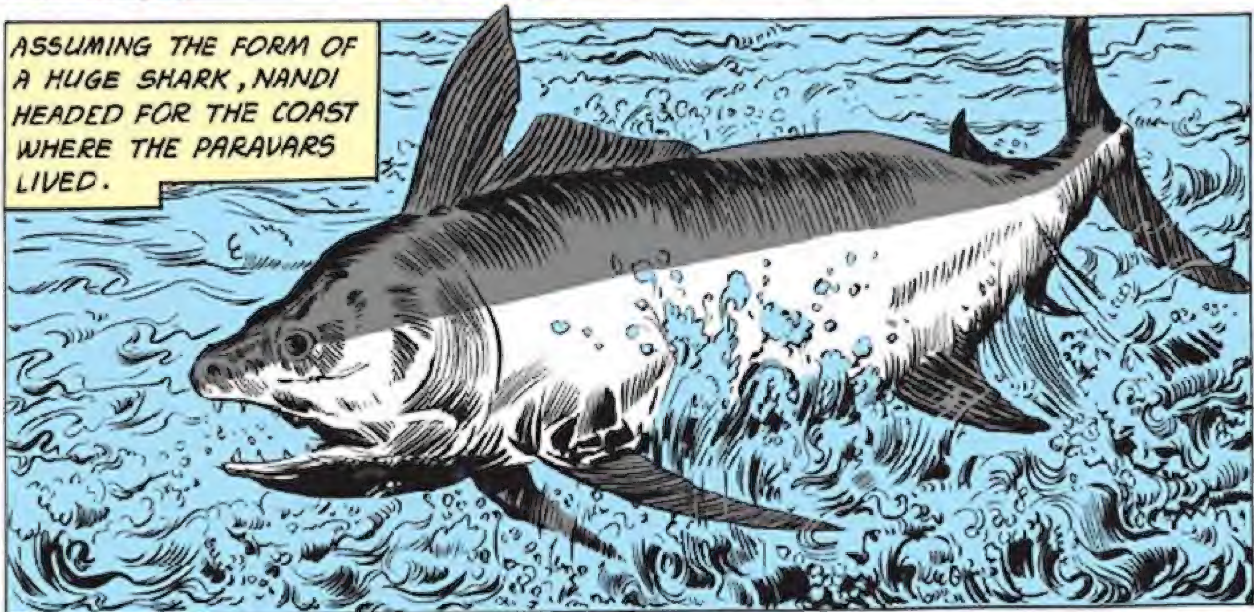

AS SHE GREW UP, SHE EVEN LEARNT TO ROW THE BOAT.
YOU ARE A REAL HELP TO ME, PARVATI.


A PRETTY GIRL!
STRONG AND CLEVER TOO!
LUCKY IS THE MAN WHO WEDS HER!


MEANWHILE AT KAILASA —
NANDI, I CAN NO LONGER LIVE WITHOUT PARVATI!
MY LORD, WHY DON'T YOU GO DOWN TO EARTH AND CLAIM HER?

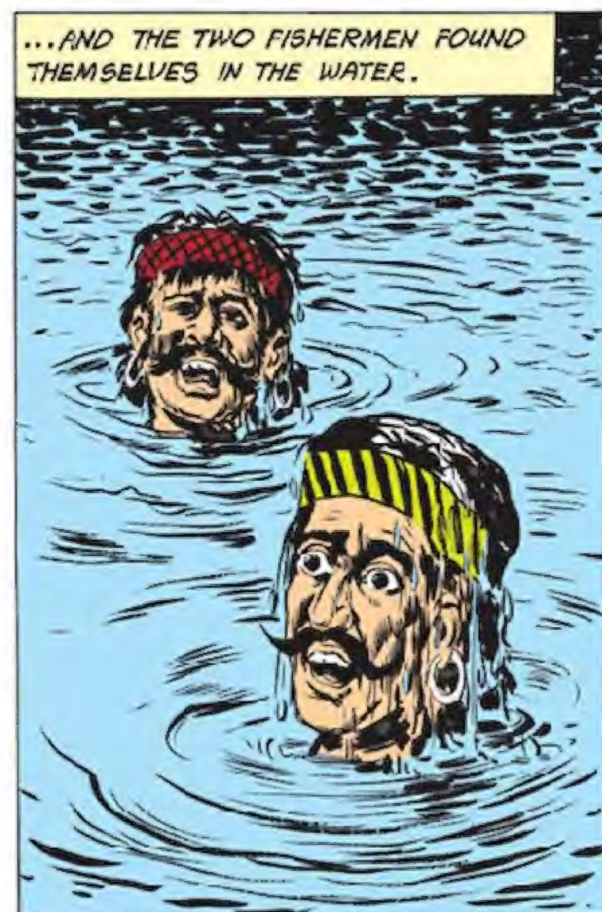

HOW CAN I, NANDI? SHE WILL NOW MARRY A FISHER-MAN.


THEN I WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU ARE FORCED TO BECOME A FISHERMAN.


ASSUMING THE FORM OF A HUGE SHARK, NANDI HEADED FOR THE COAST WHERE THE PARAVARS LIVED.


A SHARK !
QUICK ! WE MUST GET IT !


BUT BEFORE THE FISHERMEN COULD ACT, THE SHARK ATTACKED...


...AND THE TWO FISHERMEN FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE WATER.


AS THE DAYS WENT BY, THE SHARK BECAME A REGULAR MENACE.
OUR NETS ARE TORN.
AND OUR BOATS IN PIECES!
WHAT SHALL WE DO?


AT LAST, THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS CAME UP WITH AN AWARD.
I WILL OFFER THE HAND OF MY DAUGHTER TO THE ONE WHO CAPTURES THE SHARK.


MANY A YOUNG MAN TRIED...

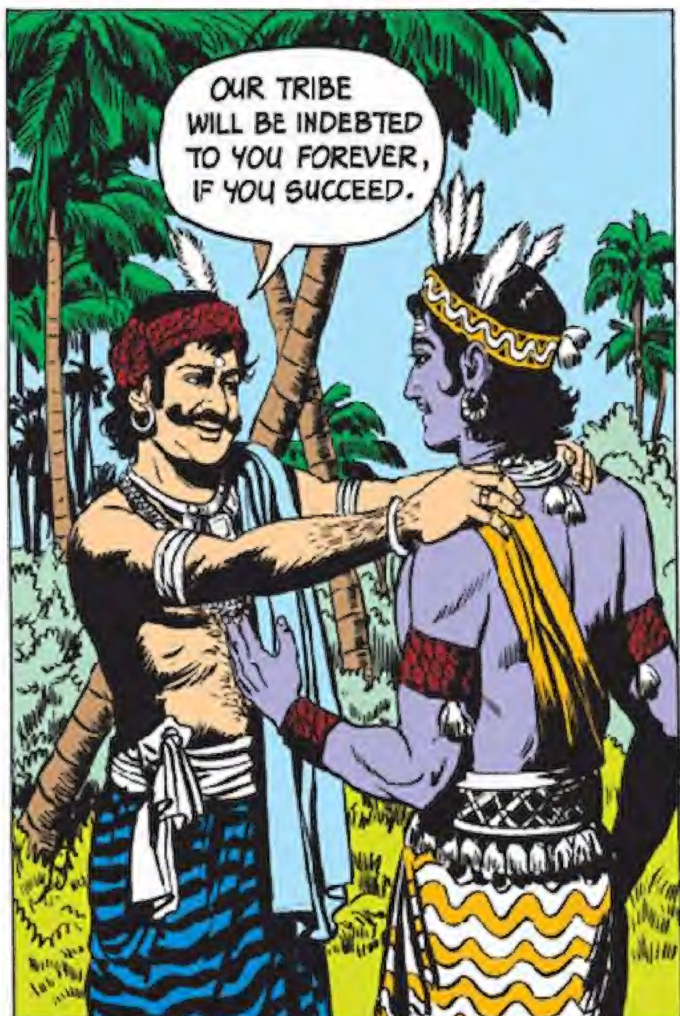

...AND FAILED.


THE DESPERATE PARAVARS AT LAST SOUGHT DIVINE HELP.
O COMPASSIONATE ONE, SAVE US FROM THE SHARK.

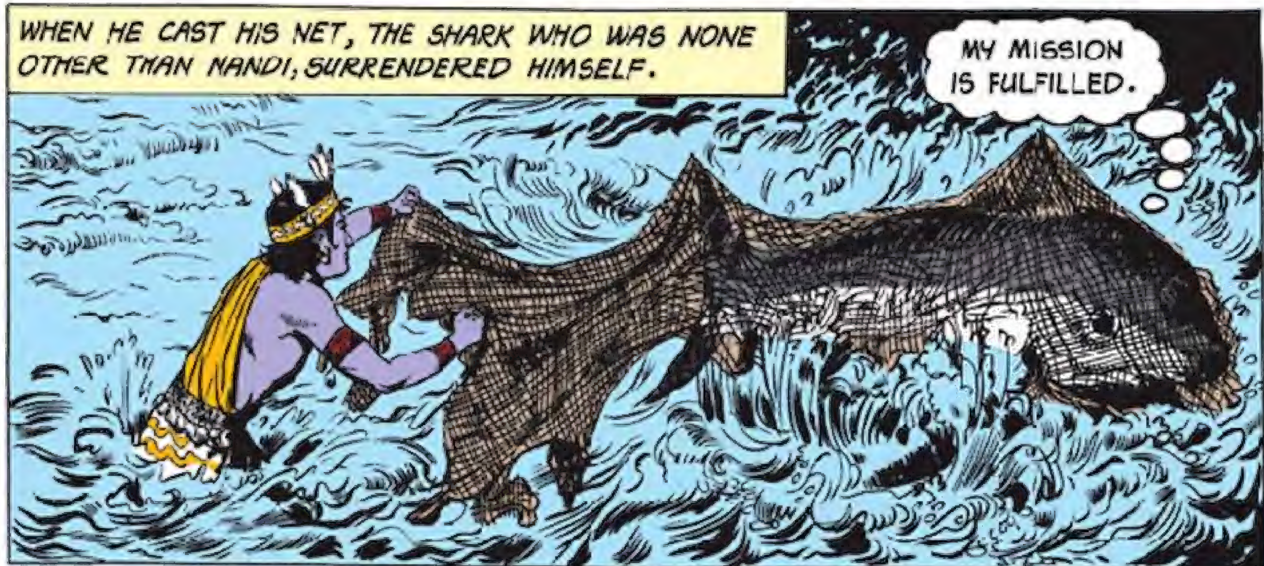

THE DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS TOO PRAYED.
LORD, COME TO OUR RESCUE. DON'T FAIL US IN THE HOUR OF NEED.


SHIVA HEARD HER PRAYER.


HE APPEARED BEFORE THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS AS A YOUNG FISHERMAN.
I HAVE COME TO CATCH THE SHARK.


OUR TRIBE WILL BE INDEBTED TO YOU FOREVER, IF YOU SUCCEED.

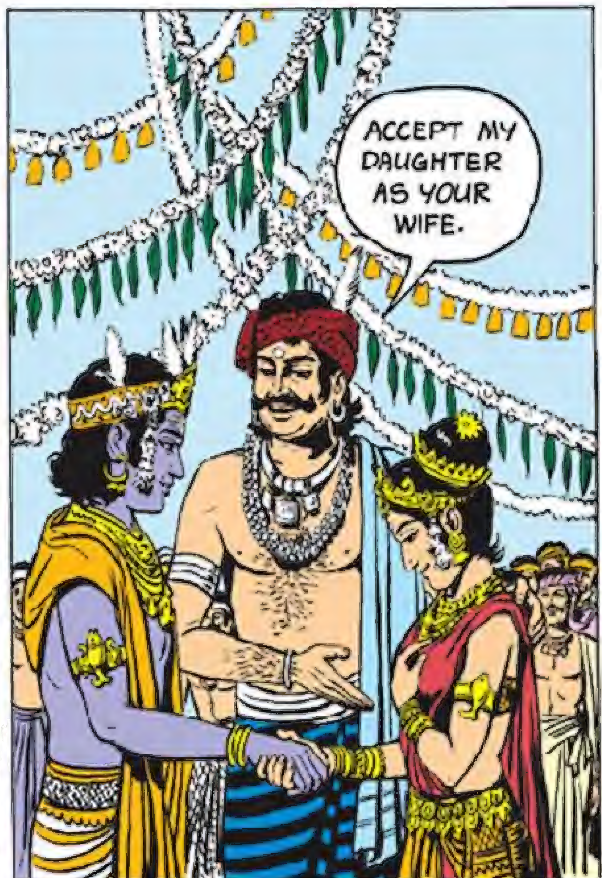

NET IN HAND, SHIVA WENT DOWN INTO THE SEA.


WHEN HE CAST HIS NET, THE SHARK WHO WAS NONE OTHER THAN NANDI, SURRENDERED HIMSELF.
MY MISSION IS FULFILLED.


AS SHIVA DRAGGED THE SHARK ASHORE —
YOU ARE OUR SAVIOUR.

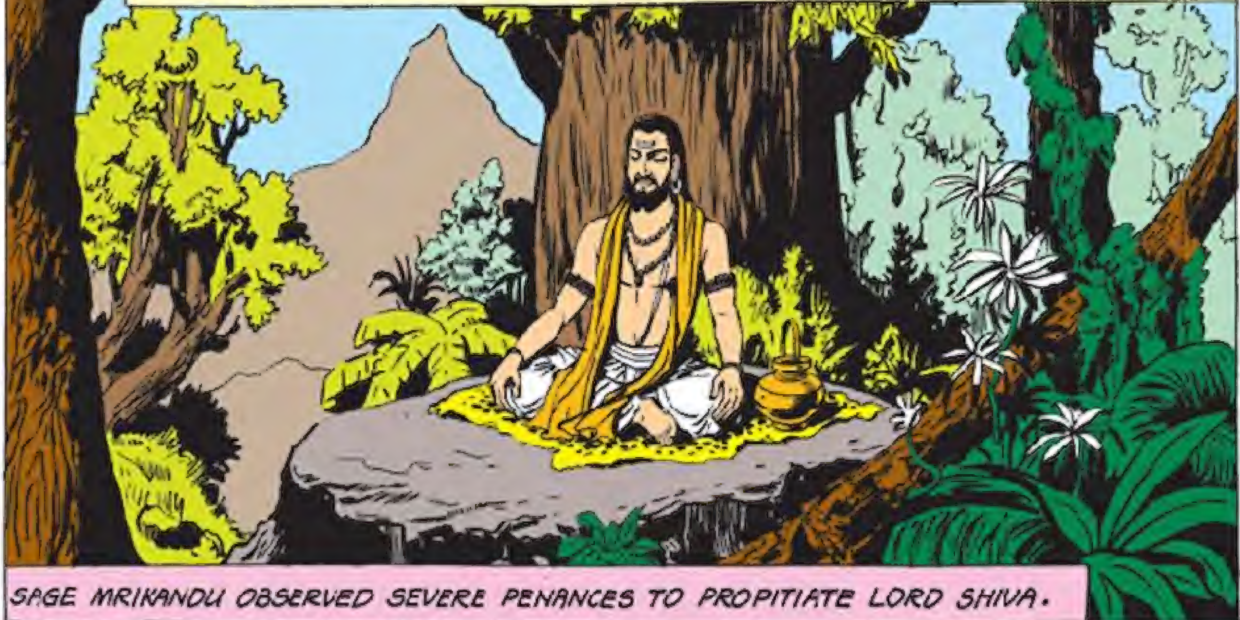

HOW FORTUNATE FOR ME THAT THIS BRAVE MAN HAS CAUGHT THE SHARK!


WELCOME TO OUR TRIBE, YOUNG MAN. BY CATCHING THE GREAT FISH YOU HAVE BECOME A GREAT FISHERMAN.
I AM INDEED GLAD TO HEAR THAT.


ACCEPT MY DAUGHTER AS YOUR WIFE.


SHIVA, THE FISHERMAN, MARRIED PARVATI, THE FISHERWOMAN. NANDI ASSUMED HIS TRUE FORM AND CARRIED THE TWO TO KAILASA.

SHIVA AND MARKANDEYA



SAGE MRIKANDU OBSERVED SEVERE PENANCES TO PROPITIATE LORD SHIVA.

WHEN LORD SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE HIM —





GRANTING THE WISH OF THE SAGE, LORD SHIVA VANISHED.

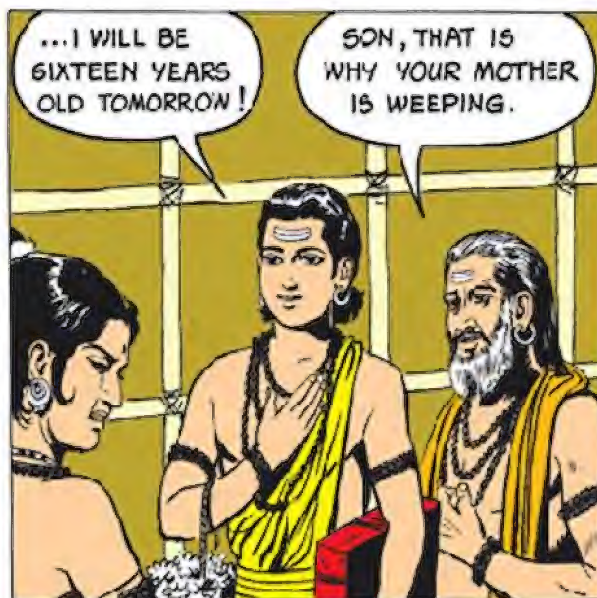
IN DUE COURSE, MARUDVATI, MRIKANDU'S WIFE, GAVE BIRTH TO A SON.

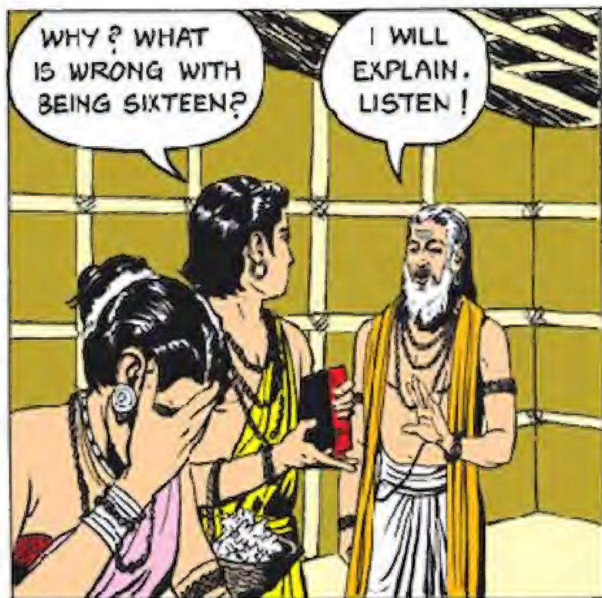


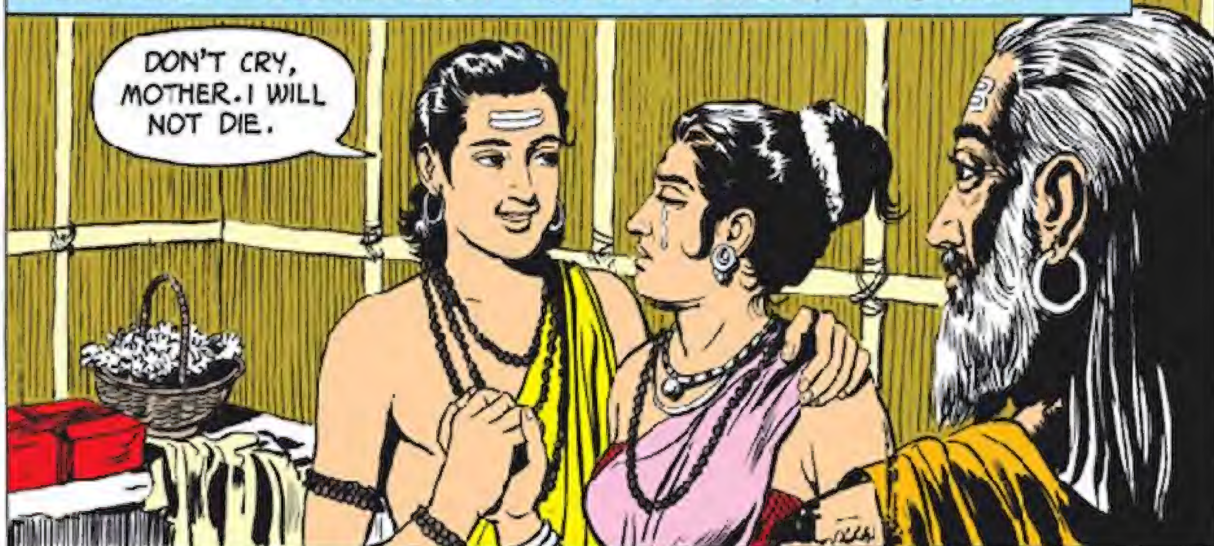

WHILE BARELY SIXTEEN, MARKANDEYA HAD MASTERED THE VEDAS.
MRIKANDU, YOU ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE SUCH A BRILLIANT SON.


WHEN THE VISITING SAGES LEFT —
I CANNOT FORGET THAT ALL THIS BRILLIANCE WILL SOON BE PUT OUT BY CRUEL DEATH.

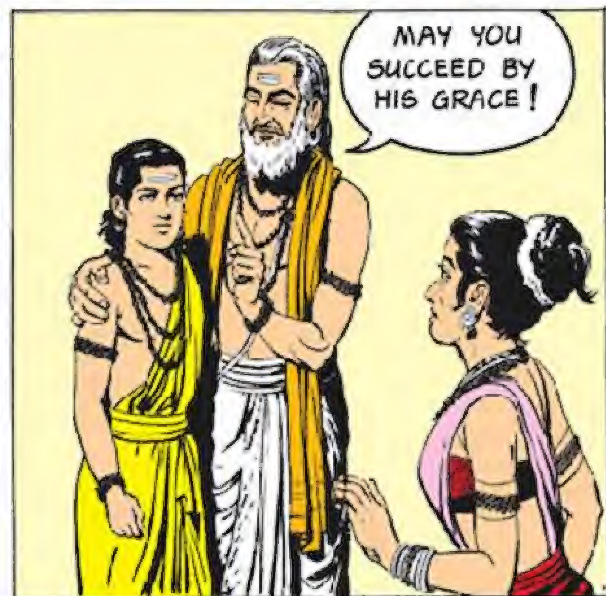

JUST THEN MARKANDEYA CAME HOME WITH THE FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP.
MOTHER! WHY ARE YOU WEEPING? WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE YOU SMILE?
WHY DON'T YOU SPEAK, MOTHER? DO YOU THINK I CAN'T GET YOU WHAT YOU WANT? I AM NOT A CHILD...


...I WILL BE SIXTEEN YEARS OLD TOMORROW!
SON, THAT IS WHY YOUR MOTHER IS WEEPING.


WHY? WHAT IS WRONG WITH BEING SIXTEEN?
I WILL EXPLAIN. LISTEN!

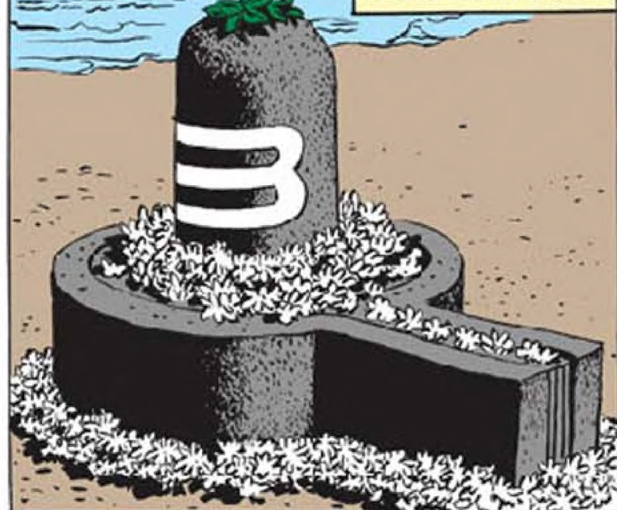

WHEN MRIKANDU TOLD HIM ABOUT THE EVENTS LEADING TO HIS BIRTH —
DON'T CRY, MOTHER. I WILL NOT DIE.

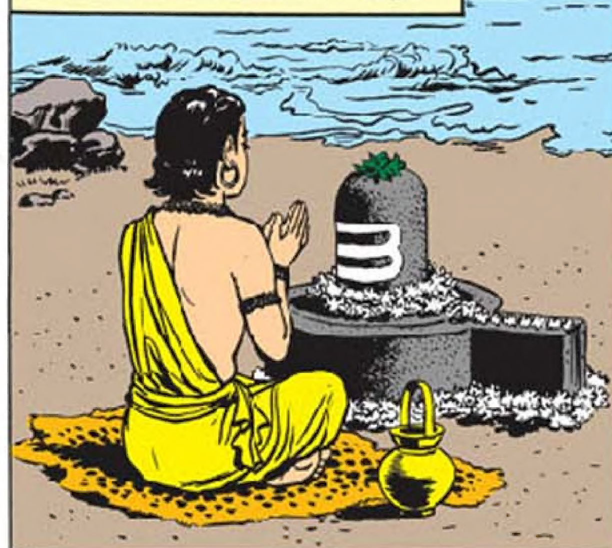

I WILL SEEK IMMORTALITY THROUGH THE GRACE OF SHIVA WHO IS THE CONQUEROR OF DEATH.


MAY YOU SUCCEED BY HIS GRACE!

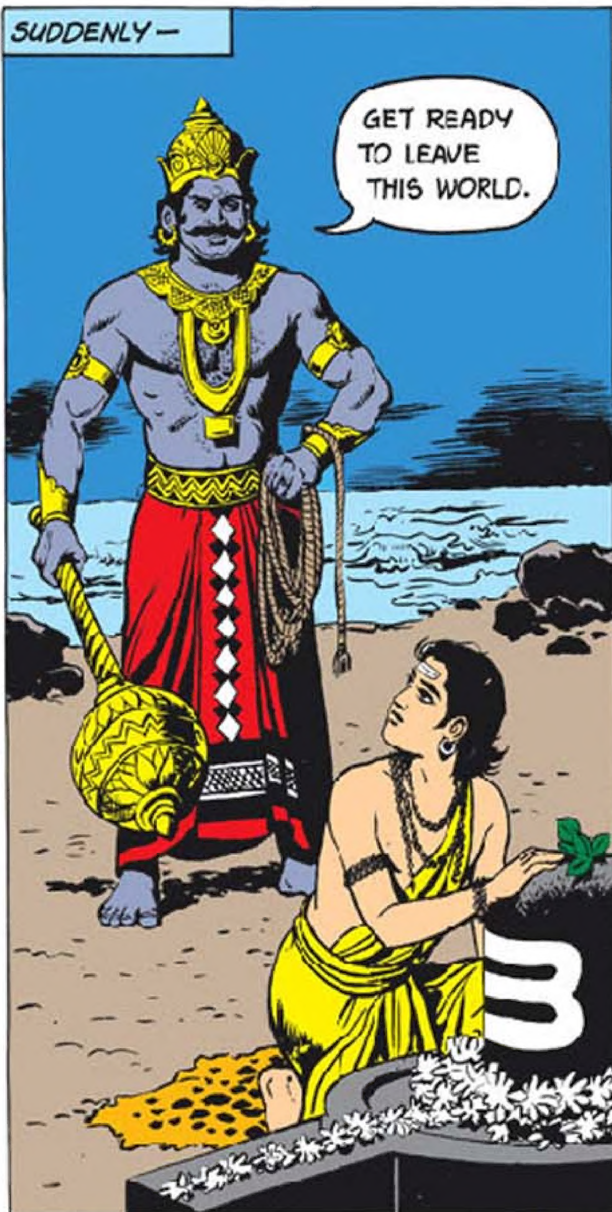

SHIVA, I LEAVE MY SON TO YOUR MERCY. PROTECT HIM.

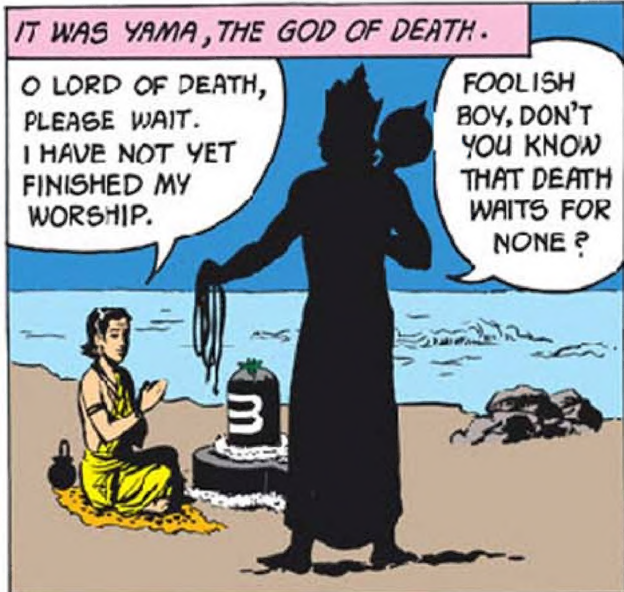

EARLY NEXT MORNING, MARKANDEYA REACHED THE SEA-SHORE WHERE HE MADE A SHIVA LINGA OUT OF THE WET SAND ...


...AND ADORNED IT WITH FLOWERS.


THEN HE SAT DOWN TO PRAY.


TOWARDS NIGHTFALL, HE BEGAN TO SING AND DANCE BEFORE THE LORD.


SUDDENLY –
GET READY TO LEAVE THIS WORLD.


IT WAS YAMA, THE GOD OF DEATH.
O LORD OF DEATH, PLEASE WAIT. I HAVE NOT YET FINISHED MY WORSHIP.
FOOLISH BOY, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT DEATH WAITS FOR NONE?


PLEASE DO NOT OBSTRUCT ME IN MY WORSHIP OF LORD SHIVA.


FOOL! DO YOU HOPE TO ESCAPE FROM ME BY CLINGING TO SHIVA? THE GRIP OF DEATH IS FATAL AS YOU SHALL NOW KNOW.

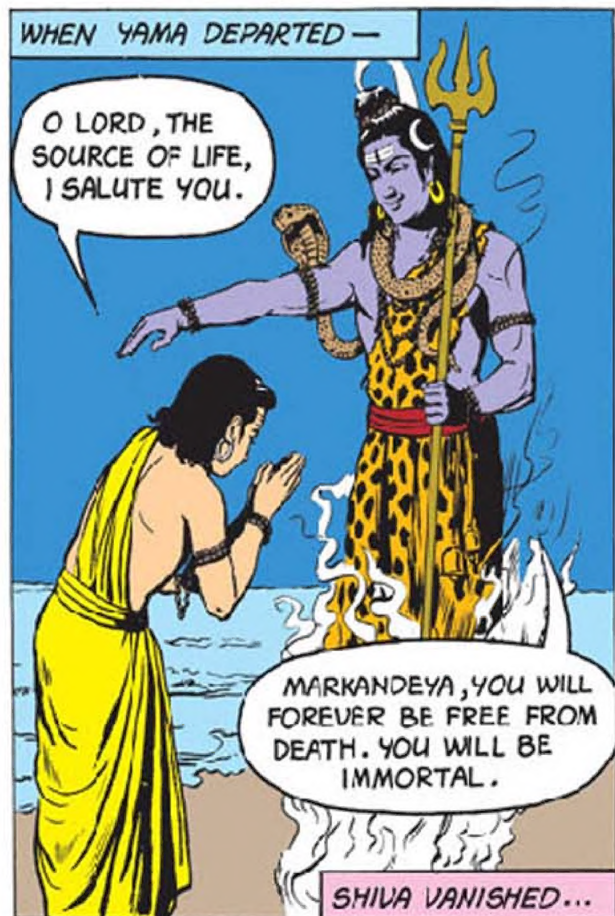




THE NEXT MOMENT, SHIVA SPRANG FROM THE LINGA AND KICKED YAMA ON THE CHEST.

LORD!


LORD, PARDON ME.


WHEN YAMA DEPARTED —
O LORD, THE SOURCE OF LIFE, I SALUTE YOU.
MARKANDEYA, YOU WILL FOREVER BE FREE FROM DEATH. YOU WILL BE IMMORTAL.
SHIVA VANISHED...


...AND MARKANDEYA RETURNED HOME.
MY SON!
MOTHER! THE LORD DID SAVE ME!